

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
EUGENE DISTRICT OFFICE

DECISION RECORD
Cedar Flats Timber Sale
Environmental Assessment No. OR090-EA-01-17

Background:

An Environmental Assessment (EA) and draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Cedar Flats Analysis Area were prepared by the McKenzie Resource Area, Eugene District Office. Timber harvest, road construction, road improvement and road decommissioning would occur on Matrix and Riparian Reserve lands as identified in the Northwest Forest Plan. The Cedar Flats Analysis area is located in T. 17 S., R. 1 W., Section 31, T.18 S., R. 1 W., Section 9 and T. 18 S., 2 W., Section 1 Will. Mer.

Management objectives are to:

- Fulfill the BLM's mission and policy of providing wood products and jobs in the General Forest Management Area (MATRIX) for FY 2001.
- Help the Eugene District meet its commercial thinning harvest commitment for FY 2001.
- Comply with the Standards and Guidelines in the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Northwest Forest Plan.
- Manage Matrix lands by commercial thinning to capture mortality, reduce stocking density and redistribute growth and yield to the remaining stand.
- Manage a portion of the Riparian Reserves by density management thinning to reduce stocking density and redistribute growth to the remaining stand.
- Construct permanent and temporary roads for timber harvesting, improve roads by replacing or eliminating culverts and decommissioning roads not needed for the foreseeable future.

Consultation:

The proposed sale was reviewed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) through the formal consultation process. The FWS Biological Opinion is that this action is a "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" the Northern Spotted Owl.

Informal conferencing by United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was completed on September 8, 1998 for Bull trout. The result of the conferencing was a "Not Likely to Adversely Affect" on Bull trout. Informal conferencing by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) was completed on June 8, 2001, for Spring Chinook, critical habitat and essential fish habitat. The result of the conferencing was a "Not Likely to Adversely Affect" on Spring Chinook.

Public Comments:

This EA and FONSI were advertised on July 18, 2001, as available for a 30 -day public review period in the Eugene Register-Guard. Copies of the EA and FONSI were mailed to interested individuals.

Finding of No Significant Impact:

On the basis of the information contained in the Environmental Assessment (OR090-EA-01-17), and all other information available to me, it is my determination that implementation of the Proposed Action or Alternative will not have significant environmental impacts not already addressed in the Record of Decision (ROD) for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (April 1994) and the Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (June 1995) as amended by the Record of Decision (ROD) for Amendment to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines, January 2001. Environmental Assessment OR 090-EA-01-17 is in conformance with the above documents and does not, in and of itself, constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement (EIS) or supplement to the existing EIS is unnecessary and will not be prepared.

Changes:**Project Design Features (see page 32, No. 5 in design features)**

A moderate to heavy low thinning technique will be used to regulate stand density. When thinning from below, trees are removed from the lower crown classes. (suppressed, intermediate, and some co-dominants). Co-dominants will be harvested when they are competing with a better formed, healthier, tree. The larger dominant/older trees will be reserved as residual trees. Tree vigor and crown position are the main factors that will determine reserve tree selection. Form and vigor will not be selection factors when reserving residual trees. Approximately 90 to 120 trees per acre will be reserved. Douglas-fir is the dominate species within the stands. Minor species (Western hemlock, incense cedar, Western red cedar, and grand fir) will be reserved at the same rate as their representation within the stand.

Decision:

The decision is to implement Alternative I the Proposed Action, as analyzed in EA OR090-EA-01-17. This Alternative consists of five commercial thinning areas (299 acres of Matrix and 22 acres of Riparian Reserve). Construction of approximately 0.81 mile of new permanent road would be constructed, 0.39 mile of rock road would be improved and 1.76 miles of road would be decommissioned.

An estimated 2.9 MMBF or 5,470 CCF (hundred cubic feet) of timber will be harvested. The mitigation measures, design features and management requirements, logging methods, and road decommissioning goals as described in the EA and as described above, are hereby adopted.

Rationale:

Alternative I is selected because it meets project objectives described in the background section of this document, and is consistent with the Standards and Guidelines in the Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (April 1994). The entire project results in fewer road miles as more road would be decommissioned than constructed. Also, relocation of a mid-slope road to a ridge top road in Partial Harvest Area 7 would decrease the hydrologic connectivity of the road system.

Alternative II (No Action Alternative) was not selected because it does not meet the project objectives described in the background section of this document, nor does it meet the intent of the SEIS/ROD or Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan.

Alternative III was not selected because the opportunity to relocate the permanent road system from a midslope location to ridgetop areas or locations where there is little or no stream influence would not occur.

Administrative Remedies:

This Decision Record can not be protested at this time. The purpose of this Decision Record is to let the public know that a decision has been made to select Alternative 1 and that the field work needed to prepare the area for sale will be implemented according to the selected Alternative. In accordance with 43 CFR 5003, a notice of sale published in the newspaper, rather than this Decision Record, will constitute the decision document for the purpose of protests. The decision to conduct a sale will be subject to protest for 15 days following first publication of the notice of sale. The tentative date for publishing the notice of sale is August 29, 2001, although this date is subject to change without notice.

Approved by: Jerry Richeson
Acting Field Manager, McKenzie Resource Area

Date: 8/21/01